

Spann was a master marketer, utilizing the radio airwaves to promote some of the biggest concerts and shows in Chicago during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, and providing a platform for African American musicians and entertainers. He formed the Delta Production Company, a concert production and marketing company which produced shows at The Regal Theatre, Arie Crown Theatre, the Lyric Opera House, the Aragon Ballroom, and the Trianon Ballroom. Spann was also the owner of The Burning Spear nightclub and several other establishments.

Spann booked James Brown; Sammy Davis, Jr.; The Temptations; Chaka Khan; Dinah Washington; Jerry Butler; The Impressions; The Four Tops; Marvin Gaye; Al Green; Otis Clay; Earth, Wind & Fire; Sam Cooke; The Staple Singers; The Commodores; Marvin Gaye; Cab Calloway; Roy Hamilton; Jackie Wilson; Little Richard; and Count Basie. Notably, he was most famous for crowning Aretha Franklin "the Queen of Soul" in 1962.

For nearly six decades, Spann's radio station played a pivotal role in creating a platform for community, business, and political leaders. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. could be heard regularly on the Wesley South Show, Malcolm X and Elijah Muhammad were part of the evening format, and Mayor Harold Washington favored WVON for his public service announcements. In 1968, WVON was the first station in the country to announce the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when Reverend Jesse Jackson called from Memphis with the news on April 4, 1968.

In 1975, WVON was sold and changed frequency. Spann formed a business partnership with Vernon Jarrett and Wesley South and bought the license to the original frequency in 1979. The new radio station, WXOL, was an all-blues format where musicians such as Johnny Taylor, Buddy Guy, KoKo Taylor, Howlin' Wolf, Otis Clay, and many others could be heard. In 1983, the station reclaimed the old call letters of WVON.

In 2012, Pervis Spann was inducted in the Blues Hall of Fame for his contributions in media, production, and business. He joined legendary musical luminaries such as B.B. King, Etta James, Mavis Staples, and Willie Dixon.

Spann was the epitome of the American dream—he went from 'sharecropping to shareholding'. Throughout his life, Spann used the radio station as an outlet to cultivate new aspiring radio personalities. He was always willing to give a helping hand to those who needed work and support, and he both recognized talent and encouraged young people to pursue a college education.

Spann, along with his wife, Mrs. Lovie Spann, and four children, Melody, Darrell, Latrice, and Chante, continued to call the South Side of Chicago home for the rest of his life. Pervis Spann's loss is deeply felt across Chicago, the nation, and even the world.

My thoughts and prayers are with his family—Lovie, Melody, Darrell, Latrice, and Chante—and with all who loved and were impacted by this truly great man.

RECOGNIZING ARLINGTON COUNTY'S FIRST RESPONDERS

HON. DONALD S. BEYER, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. BEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of our first responders for their heroism during the COVID-19 pandemic and every day for their bravery and selflessness. Arlington County's first responders have been on the frontlines, making more than 300 trips in 2021 to Culpepper Garden, consistently risking their own well-being to protect and serve our community members.

I share my colleagues' enthusiasm in the General Assembly and on the Arlington County Board in dedicating the Arlington County First Responders Bench at Culpepper Garden to recognize and celebrate all first responders on this day, March 25, 2022.

I urge all residents to join the Arlington Network for Community Readiness and help us all prepare for and respond to an emergency and to sign up for the Disaster Volunteer Registry to be a volunteer resource for our area during an emergency.

I also commend the staff and residents of Culpepper Garden for enhancing our community in so many ways. As a nonprofit retirement community that is home to 450 low-income seniors who live in 346 independent living and assisted living apartments, they help make our community dynamic and vibrant.

Please join me in commemorating these heroic first responders.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CAREER OF MICHAEL LAVOIE

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Fire Chief Michael J. Lavoie, a dedicated public servant whose commitment to protecting the safety of the people of Worcester, Massachusetts has saved countless lives over the last three decades.

Joining the Worcester Fire Department in 1987, Chief Lavoie served for 14 years as a firefighter. He was promoted to lieutenant in 2001, captain in 2008, and then Worcester Fire Safety Division District Chief and North End District Chief in 2009 and 2011, respectively. Finally, Chief Lavoie was named chief of the Worcester Fire Department in 2017. During his tenure, Chief Lavoie led the department and the City of Worcester through challenging times with grace and strength.

Throughout his career, Chief Lavoie facilitated great improvements. He helped implement training workshops and instituted a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus, which uses safety features like a thermal imager and enhanced communication capabilities to protect the health of firefighters. Chief Lavoie also worked tirelessly with Worcester City Manager Ed Augustus to bring new vehicles to the department and to make sure every firetruck was always fully staffed.

Madam Speaker, the impact Chief Lavoie had on the Worcester Fire Department cannot

be understated. He has shown, time and time again, incredible leadership and commitment to the people of Worcester.

Chief Lavoie is a public servant, through and through. Over the course of his 35-year long career, he gave so much to the City of Worcester and improved the working conditions of firefighters along the way. I also have to thank Chief Lavoie's family for supporting him in his service to our city. Their sacrifice has allowed all of us to have a safer place to call home.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress and all the people in whose lives Chief Lavoie has made a difference, it is my great privilege to thank and recognize Chief Michael J. Lavoie for his service to the people of Massachusetts and his unwavering commitment to making a safer world.

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF TAFT COLLEGE

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 24, 2022

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Taft College and recognize the profound contribution the school has made to our community over the last century.

Established on August 30, 1922, Taft College emerged from humble beginnings. Sharing a campus with Taft Union High School at the time, Taft College enrolled 10 students in its first year of operation. As one of only 15 community colleges in California in the early 1920s, the Taft Union High School District Board—the founders of Taft College—envisioned that the school would transform the region by offering local students unprecedented access to higher education. Since then, the school has done just that, producing leaders in business, law, nursing, education, athletics, and public service.

Today, Taft College is bustling, operating its own independent campus of nearly 40 acres and its enrollment has grown to 2,400 students. With an average class size of 18 students, students may enroll in any of the 43 degree and 30 certificate programs offered at Taft College and receive high-quality instruction in fields of study ranging from Liberal Arts to Engineering in small group settings.

Throughout the past century, Taft has proven itself as a leader among community colleges. In 1995, the school created the Transition to Independent Living (TIL) Program and in 1997, pioneered a distance learning program. The TIL Program is a two-year, post-secondary educational program that provides training and support for students with developmental or intellectual disabilities and helps prepare them to lead confident, self-sufficient lives. Taft College's innovative, first-of-its-kind distance learning program offers greater flexibility to students pursuing a degree while balancing additional priorities at work and in life. Both programs have garnered respect and accolades from educational leaders within and beyond the Taft community.

Taft College's success and the critical role that it plays in uplifting individuals throughout California's Central Valley are undeniable. I am confident that Taft College will continue to